SOPLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Document Retention Policy

This policy was reviewed and adopted by Full Council in May 2026.

PRIME OBJECTIVES

Sopley Parish Council recognises that the efficient management of its records is necessary to comply with legal and regulatory obligations and to allow for its effective management. This policy has been created to detail how the records maintained by the parish council are kept and when they should be destroyed.

SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to all records, in all formats that are created, received or maintained by the parish council. A small percentage of the parish council's records will be selected for permanent preservation as part of the council's archives and for historical research.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Sopley Parish Council have a corporate responsibility to maintain its records in line with regulatory requirements. The person with overall responsibility for this maintenance is the Parish Clerk with assistance from other members of staff.

RELATIONSHIP WITH EXISTING POLICIES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the parish council's

- Freedom of Information policy
- General data protection regulation policies

RETENTION SCHEDULE

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the parish council is required to maintain a retention schedule which lays down the length of time certain record sets need to be retained. Sopley Parish Council have adopted a policy in line with the National Association of Local Council's legal topic note LTN40 (Local Councils' documents and records.

Document	Minimum retention period	Reason / Act	Electronic/paper copy	Stored
Minute books	Indefinite	Archive / historical record	Electronic & hard-copy (signed)	Clerks' storage
Asset register	Indefinite	Management	electronic	website/pc
Scales of fees and charges	6 years	Management	electronic	website/pc
Receipt and payment accounts	Indefinite	Archive	electronic	Clerks' storage
Receipt books of all kinds	6 years	VAT	electronic	electronic
Bank statements including deposit / savings accounts	Last completed audit year	Audit	Paper now electronic	Clerks' storage then destroyed by shredding/fire.
Bank paying in books	Last completed audit year	Audit	n/a	n/a
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit	n/a	n/a
Quotations and tenders	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	electronic	Archived & then deleted
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT	electronic	electronic
Paid cheques	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	n/a	n/a
VAT records	6 years	VAT	electronic	Electronic/HMRC
Petty cash books	6 years	VAT, Limitation Act 1980 9 as amended)	n/a	n/a
Insurance policies	While valid	Management	Electronic	Electronic
Certificate for Insurance against liability for employees	40 years from the date on which the insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regs 1998 section 4. Management	Electronic	Electronic and then archived
Investments	Indefinite	Audit, Management	n/a	n/a

Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit, Management	Paper/electronic	Clerks' storage/electronic
Members' allowances register	6 years	Tax, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	n/a	n/a
Local Plans and similar documents	Until they are no longer in force	Management	Electronic	Electronic
External magazines, journals and the like	1 year or for as long as they are useful	Management	n/a	n/a
Parish Newsletter	Indefinite with a copy sent to the British Library	Archive / historical record, The Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003	electronic	Website
Routine correspondence and emails	6 months after relevant issue is completed	Management	electronic	Archived when completed.
Parish Councillors • applications for co-option • declarations of acceptance of office • members register of interests	Term of office + 1 year	Management	electronic	electronic
Employees' records	Employment period + 6 years	Management	electronic	Pc/Basic PAYE with HMRC

All computer records are backed up onto automatic Icloud system. Updated daily. (Microsoft 365 OneCloud system).